

Amendments to the Claims:

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

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Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

1. (Currently Amended) A method in one or more computer systems for identifying auctions offering units of the same item, comprising:

displaying information about a first auction, the information including a description of a first item unit offered in the first auction;

receiving user input requesting information about other auctions offering ~~items~~ item units that are units of the same item as the first item unit;

determining, for the description of the first item unit among descriptions of ~~items~~ item units offered in a group of auctions including the first auction, the inverse document frequency of terms occurring within the description of the first item unit;

selecting a plurality of terms within the description of the first item unit having the largest inverse document frequencies;

for each of the selected terms, conducting a search for auctions in the group whose item descriptions contain the selected term;

for each auction found in at least one of the conducted searches, determining which of the selected terms occur in the auction's item description;

identifying as an auction offering an item unit that is a unit of the same item as the first item unit an auction among the found auctions where the sum of the inverse document frequencies of the selected terms that occur in the item description for the auction exceeds a threshold; and

displaying information about the identified auction.

2. (Currently Amended) A method in a computer system for identifying purchasing opportunities within a set of purchasing opportunities that are similar to a

distinguished purchasing opportunity, the distinguished purchasing opportunity having descriptive information associated with it, comprising:

for each of a plurality of terms occurring in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity, generating a term score reflecting the extent to which the occurrence of the term in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity differentiates the distinguished purchasing opportunity from other purchasing opportunities in the set;

selecting as key words a plurality of terms having the highest term scores;

identifying purchasing opportunities of the set containing one or more key words;

establishing a purchasing opportunity score for each identified purchasing opportunity by summing the term score of the one ~~one~~ or more key words occurring in descriptive information associated with the identified purchasing opportunities; and

displaying information about one or more of the identified purchasing opportunities.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein generating a term score for each term includes determining the fraction of occurrences of the term in descriptive information associated with the purchasing opportunities of the set that occur in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

4. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein identifying purchasing opportunities of the set containing key words includes performing a separate search for purchasing opportunities whose descriptive information includes each key word to produce a search result.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, further comprising determining which key words occur in the descriptive information associated with each purchasing opportunities based upon which of the produced search results contain the purchasing opportunity.

6. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the distinguished purchasing opportunity and at least a subset of the purchasing opportunities of the set are of one or more purchasing opportunity types selected from the group consisting of:

store;
classified sale;
auction;
reverse auction; and
purchase aggregation.

7. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising selecting the distinguished purchasing opportunity in response to a user request to display information about the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

8. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising selecting the distinguished purchasing opportunity in response to the exercise of the distinguished purchasing opportunity by a selected user.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising selecting the distinguished purchasing opportunity in response to the purchase by the selected user of an item offered in the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising selecting the distinguished purchasing opportunity in response to a bid by the selected user on an item offered in the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

11. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising, in response to a user request for information about a purchasing opportunity similar to the distinguished purchasing opportunity, displaying information about the identified purchasing opportunity having the largest purchasing opportunity score.

12. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising, in response to a user request for information about the distinguished purchasing opportunity, displaying

information about the identified purchasing opportunity having the largest purchasing opportunity score in conjunction with displaying information about the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

13. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising displaying at least a portion of the identified purchasing opportunities in the order of their purchasing opportunity scores.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, further comprising displaying a proper subset of the identified purchasing opportunities, wherein each of the identified purchasing opportunities in the proper subset has a ~~whose~~ minimum purchasing opportunity score ~~s each exceed~~ that exceeds a minimum threshold.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the displaying displays a predetermined fixed number of the identified purchasing opportunities.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14 wherein the displaying displays all of the identified purchasing opportunities whose purchasing opportunity scores each exceed the minimum threshold.

17. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a predetermined fixed number of key words are selected.

18. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a number of terms that is a predetermined fraction of the number of terms occurring in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity are selected as key words.

19. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein all of the terms whose term scores exceed a minimum threshold are selected as key words.

20. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes the purchasing opportunity type of the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

21. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes an item name of an item offered in the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

22. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes an item description of an item offered in the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

23. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a price at which an item is offered in the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

24. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a seller identity of the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

25. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a seller location of the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

26. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes availability of an item offered in the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

27. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes shipping terms for an item offered in the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

28. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes forms of payment accepted for the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

29. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein distinguished purchasing opportunity is an auction, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes the closing date of the auction.

30. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a distinguished item is offered for purchase in the distinguished purchasing opportunity, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a publisher of the distinguished item.

31. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a distinguished item is offered for purchase in the distinguished purchasing opportunity, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes an author of the distinguished item.


32. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a distinguished item is offered for purchase in the distinguished purchasing opportunity, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes an artist of the distinguished item.

33. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a distinguished item is offered for purchase in the distinguished purchasing opportunity, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a performer of the distinguished item.

34. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a distinguished item is offered for purchase in the distinguished purchasing opportunity, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a size of the distinguished item.

35. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a distinguished item is offered for purchase in the distinguished purchasing opportunity, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a color of the distinguished item.

36. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein a distinguished item is offered for purchase in the distinguished purchasing opportunity, and wherein the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity includes a style of the distinguished item.



37. (Withdrawn) A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computer system to identify purchasing opportunities within a set of purchasing opportunities that are similar to a distinguished purchasing opportunity, the distinguished purchasing opportunity having descriptive information associated with it, by:

for each of a plurality of terms occurring in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity, generating a term score reflecting the extent to which the occurrence of the term in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity differentiates the distinguished purchasing opportunity from other purchasing opportunity in the set;

selecting as key words a plurality of terms having the highest term scores;


identifying purchasing opportunities of the set containing one or more key words; and

establishing a purchasing opportunity score for each identified purchasing opportunity by summing the term score of the one or more key words occurring in information associated with the identified purchasing opportunities.

38. (Withdrawn) The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein generating a term score for each term includes determining the fraction of occurrences of the term in information associated with the purchasing opportunities of the set that occur in the information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity.

39. (Withdrawn) The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein the contents of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to display at least a portion of the identified purchasing opportunities in the order of their purchasing opportunity scores.

40. (Withdrawn) The computer-readable medium of claim 37 wherein the contents of the computer-readable medium further cause the computer system to display a proper subset of the identified purchasing opportunities whose purchasing opportunity scores each exceed a minimum threshold.



41. (Withdrawn) A data processing system comprising a hardware and software combination for scoring purchasing opportunities within a set of purchasing opportunities in terms of their similarity to a distinguished purchasing opportunity, the distinguished purchasing opportunity having descriptive information associated with it, the system comprising:

a term score generator that, for each of a plurality of terms occurring in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity, generates a term score reflecting the extent to which the occurrence of the term in the descriptive information associated with the distinguished purchasing opportunity differentiates the distinguished purchasing opportunity from other purchasing opportunity in the set;

a key word selection subsystem that selects as key words a plurality of terms having the highest term scores;

a purchasing opportunity identification subsystem that identifies purchasing opportunities of the set containing one or more key words; and

a purchasing opportunity scoring subsystem that establishes a purchasing opportunity score for each identified purchasing opportunity by summing the term score of the one or more key words occurring in information associated with the identified purchasing opportunities.

42-53. (Cancelled)

54. (Withdrawn) A computer memory containing a purchasing opportunity ranking data structure, comprising a plurality entries, each entry comprising an indication of a purchasing opportunity and an indication of a purchasing opportunity score indicating a level of similarity between the purchasing opportunity and a selected purchasing opportunity.

55. (Withdrawn) The computer memory of claim 54 wherein the purchasing opportunity score indicated by each entry is based upon inverse document frequency scores of terms occurring both in information describing the purchasing opportunity of the entry and in information describing the selected purchasing opportunity.

56. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying information about at least a portion of the found auctions.

57. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein selecting the plurality of terms includes comparing the inverse document frequency of each of the terms occurring within the description of the first item with a minimum threshold.
